

The Norman Conquest

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to hang in the balance. They sent envoys through whom they offered to hold Apulia by yearly tribute from the Pope; Frederick of Lorraine gave them a contemptuous choice between death or flight. The Papalists, superior in numbers, were assured of victory; the Germans in particular, proud of their own tall stature and long locks, derided the Normans, who were smaller than their enemies, * Left with only one resource, the Norman chiefs decided on battle (i.e. June, 1053). Guiscard commanded the third or reserve battalion; the other two squadrons under Humfrey and Richard opened the battle by charging the Papalists, who had been drawn up in two divisions—the Italian-Lombards on the left, the Swabians on the right, Richard easily broke and routed far the Italian levies, but Humfrey, reinforced by Guiscard, encountered a desperate resistance from the German foot, The latter, only seven hundred in number, proved themselves equal to their reputation; forming an unbreakable front, and wielding their long striking swords, they struck down horses and men with single blows. It was only when Richard of Aversa returned and plunged in

to Humfrey's help that the day was
decided;
the Germans, who preferred to die
rather

*" Teutonic! quia caesarles et forma decoros
Faerat ©gregie procerl corporis illos
Corpora derident Normannica qti®
breviora
Esse videbantur nee eorttm nuntia
curant.'

Guill. Ap_M bk. ii,, p.